



## United States Department of State

*Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs  
Washington, D.C. 20522*

[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)

April 22, 2013

Dear Summer Work Travel Participant:

Congratulations on your participation in the Summer Work Travel Program this year! Summer Work Travel is the U.S. Department of State's largest cultural exchange program. I want you to know that your decision to come to the United States is important to us. We want your stay in our country to be a life-changing, positive experience for you.

Your health, safety and welfare are our top priorities at the Department of State and being prepared will help you have a safe and exciting experience. Before you leave, you should:

- Contact your employer to confirm job offer details. Make sure all terms and conditions are clear and you understand them all. If there is anything you do not understand, ask your employer or your U.S. sponsor before you come. Your job terms must follow all state and federal laws.
- Notify your employer and your U.S. sponsor of your exact arrival time and make sure you fully understand the best way to travel to your housing or employment address.
- If your sponsor is not meeting you, plan the journey to your destination carefully.
- Make certain that you have enough money to cover your expenses. Your U.S. sponsor should provide you with an estimate of the needed amount. If they haven't, ask them.
- Study all the pre-arrival materials provided by your U.S. sponsor. Make sure you understand your rights in this country and in the program, as well as your obligations, such as updating your address once you arrive. Contact your U.S. sponsor if you have additional questions.
- Learn about the area in which you will live and work in the United States before you come, especially about that area's safe and affordable housing, public transportation, medical facilities, banks, etc. Your sponsor is the right resource to advise you if that is not clear.
- Make sure you keep information on your rights close at hand at all times, as well as emergency resources – they should be included in your orientation materials.

The Summer Work Travel Program is all about seeing and learning new things, meeting as many Americans as possible and making new friendships. Thousands of young people from many different countries come to experience American culture on this program each year. As you meet new people, they will learn about your country and culture. You may be the only person they have met from your country. Remember to represent your country well. Through this program, you will build a stronger relationship between the people of your country and ours.

Your U.S. sponsor, identified on your Form DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Program (J-1) Status, is your first point of contact throughout your stay in the United

States. If you have any questions about your exchange program or need assistance of any kind while here, immediately contact your U.S. sponsor. It is their job to help you and respond to your needs. Your U.S. sponsor gave you an emergency telephone contact number in your program orientation materials. This telephone number is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you have concerns or issues that your U.S. sponsor has not resolved, or you are having a problem with your sponsor, contact the Department of State through our J-1 Visa Emergency Helpline (1-866-283-9090), available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, or by e-mail at [jvisas@state.gov](mailto:jvisas@state.gov).

We are pleased that you made the decision to participate in the Summer Work Travel program and hope that you enjoy your stay in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robin J. Lerner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robin J. Lerner  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Private Sector Exchange